

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Ussr (Leningrad Oblast)

DATE DISTR. 15 NOV 49

SUBJECT Dam Construction on the Svir River  
near Podporozh'ye

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1. Location: [redacted] a large retaining dam is being constructed on the Svir River 2.5 kilometers downstream from Podporozh'ye and about 10 kilometers upstream from the place where the Leningrad-Petrozavodsk railway and road cross the Svir River. The Svir River, which connects the Onega (Oneshskoye) Lake and the Ladoga (Ladozhskoye) Lake, has considerable boat traffic, and accordingly the double locks necessary for this boat traffic will require large expenditures. A power station is to be linked with the dam installations.

2. Installations: The dam construction apparently was begun several years ago, but it is still in the beginning stages. PWs did not work on the dam. [redacted] large quantities of earth were being moved, in part by numerous machines (tower cranes).

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3. Stretching between the dam and Podporozh'ye, mostly on the left bank of the river, are several workshops and barracks, which are supposed to be connected with the construction of the dam and the power station. Near PW Camp No. 7701 are two rather large workshops, whose erection was begun in the second half of 1948. One, 100 x 30 meters, was completed early in 1949, and it is to be used as a foundry. The other, 150 x 50 meters, was still under construction in April 1949. [redacted] the purpose of the latter shop; but, according to rumor, it is to be used as an assembly shop. The yards around these two plants were cut off from the area around the PW Camp early in 1949.

4. The gravel factory (Steinwerk), equipped with two gravel and ballast crushers (Steinbrecher und Schotterbrecher) was still under construction in April 1949, but its erection was nearing completion. The gravel factory is recognizable by its two towers, through which raw materials are brought

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in. The hydro-electric plant (Hydromontage) is a large iron-structure building which is still under construction. Although its name would indicate that the plant is connected with dam project, the actual use to which it will be put is unknown to source.

5. A chain of barracks has been constructed around the Podporozh'ye project, and these seem to indicate that, beginning in 1949, the construction work is to be greatly intensified. The PWs were quartered in Camp Nr. 7701, which was later to be occupied by Soviet prisoners. The camp, located on the rather steep river bank which lies between the Svir River and the town of Podporozh'ye, consisted originally of two old barracks; but, in the second half of 1948, seven new barracks were begun and completed.

6. Approximately 100 to 200 meters southeast of the gravel crusher is a barracks camp, still under construction in April 1949. The twelve or fifteen buildings there are designed to house the workers employed in the vicinity. The barracks camp UBS, southwest of Podporozh'ye, comprises eight new barracks, which are used for Soviet prisoners. This camp, completed in 1948, was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence early in 1949.

7. Technical equipment: There are great variations in the technical equipment used on the various projects. While 30-to 40-meter-high tower cranes (redgers?) are used in the work on the dam, the excavation work for the construction of the two workshops near Camp 7701 was done entirely by hand. The equipment of the gravel factory, still under construction in April 1949, is modern and serviceable.

8. All the construction sites have an adequate number of trucks at their disposal. In addition to Studebakers, a considerable number of ZIS four-ton trucks have appeared recently. In Podporozh'ye there is a large garage and repair shop for the trucks. [redacted] at least 300 trucks are stationed there. A railway spur connects the Podporozh'ye project with the main line of the Leningrad-Volkhov-Petrozavodsk railway, which is part of the important Murmansk line. The spur runs along the left bank of the Svir River and branches into a network of tracks in the area of the Podporozh'ye project. Electrical current for the project apparently comes from the Svir Construction Area III, where a power plant has been erected approximately 30 kilometers downstream from Podporozh'ye.

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9. Management and personnel: The management of the construction work lay exclusively in the hands of civilians. The only military personnel connected with the project were the guards and their officers. 1000 PWs worked on the new workshops near the PW camp and on the construction of the hydro-electric plant. At times Soviet prisoners, drawn from other projects, also worked on these shops. [redacted] no figures on the number of personnel employed on other construction sites, but [redacted] saw long columns of Soviet prisoners moving toward the dam each morning.

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\* [redacted] Comment: According to [redacted] map, not included in this report, the town of Podporozh'ye and not the dam is ten kilometers upstream from where the Leningrad-Petrozavodsk railway crosses the river.

Encl: 1 map

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